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OBITUARY NOTICE.

WILLIAM MADDOCK BAYLISS.

1860–1924.

No physiologist of recent times has left so important a mark on the progress of his science as Sir William Bayliss. There is none whose untimely death will be so deeply regretted, and whose place it will be so hard to fill. As one who has known him throughout his scientific career it has fallen to my lot to pen a few brief words of appreciation and sympathy. More I cannot attempt: fuller biographies of his life and work will doubtless appear elsewhere.

His life was devoted whole-heartedly to research; this was carried out at Oxford, at University College, London, and in his private laboratory at his Hampstead home. His energy was untiring, his writings numerous, his discoveries important and his influence on physiological science far-reaching and world-wide.

His name will go down to posterity as the apostle of "General Physiology" and for his monumental treatise on that subject. Bayliss, however, was in truth a general physiologist, not in the narrower sense of that term, but in its wider or literal meaning. The tendency of the modern teacher is specialisation, but Bayliss had none of this; there were few or no aspects of his science which he neglected or failed to illuminate. He made no pretence of being a chemist; yet his selection as joint editor of this *Journal* was universally hailed as the wisest choice that could have been made, and there is nobody who will suffer by his death more than those responsible for the conduct of the *Biochemical Journal*; his biological instincts, his catholic attainments and wide knowledge make his loss irreparable; in like manner he never posed as a physicist or a mathematician, but again he of all others called these sciences in an effective way into the service of the science of life.

His all-embracing sympathies with the learner made him throughout a guide, philosopher and friend to all enquirers, and these will keenly feel the gap now left.

I have seen it stated that to the beginner and average student he was somewhat indifferent, but if this were so (and I am by no means sure that it was so), I am certain that it was due to no lack of fellow-feeling but because he had a higher purpose to fulfil, namely to guide those with more ambitious aims, and especially to instruct his fellow-physiologists.

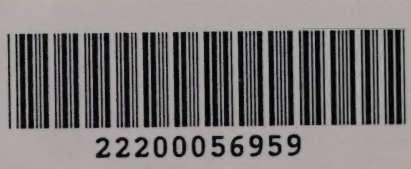
His life as a University Professor was happily untrammelled by work of a purely administrative nature, though again he had great business gifts, as was proved by the high place he occupied in the councils of his fellows, and his effective chairmanship of important committees of investigators.

His original and lucid way of looking at the problems before him was his great asset; a striking example is furnished by the fact that he was the earliest to recognise the important part which Physical Chemistry was to play in the progress of modern physiology, and in the physiology of the future.

When stricken less than two years ago by an obscure disease which was difficult to diagnose and the progress of which none could stay, his numerous friends followed with anxiety the reports of its fell progress; and when the dreaded end came, one and all felt not only the great loss they had sustained, but realised they had to mourn the departure of a truly great man.

To his immediate relatives and especially to his sorrowing widow and children these feelings will be mingled with others of a more personal nature, and to them one can only offer deep and respectful sympathy.

W. D. H.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